Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently Amended) A drive mechanism, comprising:

a hydraulic force transmitting element having a primary unit with a small primary piston and a secondary unit with a large secondary piston ~~that are executed with differential pistons~~ whose large effective surfaces jointly define a cylinder chamber, and whose small effective surfaces each define one annular chamber, wherein the annular chambers ~~being~~ are in hydraulic communication with each other, and ~~including~~ comprising a spindle drive for driving the primary piston, wherein the secondary piston indirectly or directly ~~acting~~ acts on a ~~workpiece~~ workpiece;

a ~~to be attacked; and~~ pre-tensioning means for subjecting the cylinder chamber to a pre-tensioning ~~pressure;~~ pressure, increasing the pressure difference in direction of the force built-up by the secondary piston; and

a path and/or pressure measuring system for detecting a relative position of the primary and secondary pistons and/or for detecting a pressure in the cylinder chamber.

~~wherein the two annular chambers are in hydraulic communication with each other via a pressure line, with an adjusting valve for controlling this hydraulic connection open and closed being arranged in the pressure line, and the cylinder chamber is in hydraulic communication with the annular chamber of the primary unit; and further comprising~~

~~a displacement valve for controlling the hydraulic connection open or closed..~~

14. (Previously Presented) The drive mechanism in accordance with claim 13, wherein the pre-tensioning means may be activated and deactivated through the intermediary of a pre-tensioning valve.

15. (Currently Amended) The drive mechanism in accordance with claim 13, wherein the drive mechanism is for a blanking machine, a nibbling machine, or a blanking and nibbling machine.

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Previously Presented) The drive mechanism in accordance with claim 13, wherein the pre-tensioning means is a hydraulic accumulator or a pump.

18. (Currently Amended) The drive mechanism in accordance with claim 13, further comprising a feed pump for supplying the ~~hydraulic accumulator~~pre-tensioning means, which is adapted to be driven by the secondary piston.

19. (Previously Presented) The drive mechanism in accordance with claim 18, wherein a pressure at the secondary piston acts via a spring on a plunger piston of the feed pump.

20. (Previously Presented) The drive mechanism in accordance with claim 13, wherein several spindles are arranged in parallel.

21. (Previously Presented) The drive mechanism in accordance with claim 13, wherein the cylinder housing of the primary unit is encompassed by the cylinder housing of the secondary unit.

22. (Previously Presented) The drive mechanism in accordance with claim 21, wherein an end portion of the cylinder housing of the primary unit plunges into a recess of the secondary piston.

23. (Currently Amended) The drive mechanism in accordance with claim 13, wherein ~~the~~ a pressure medium is water.

24. (New) The drive mechanism in accordance with claim 13, wherein the annular chambers are in hydraulic communication with each other via a pressure line, with an adjusting valve for opening and closing a hydraulic connection arranged in the pressure line.

25. (New) The drive mechanism in accordance with claim 13, wherein the cylinder chamber is in hydraulic communication with the annular chamber of the primary unit, and further comprising a displacement valve for opening or closing a hydraulic connection between the cylinder chamber and the annular chamber of the primary unit.